

introduced that evening. They danced together, talked together on the porch. Their conversation, perfectly proper and platonic, was unmistakably one of understanding.

All that night Harry lay awake, thinking of Miriam and again of Norma. He remembered how he had come into Norma's life six months before. He recalled how the serenity of her nature had appealed to him. There had been a sweetheart of Norma's — a young man named Willis. They had been comrades since childhood, and, though nothing had been said of love, most people had believed that Willis would marry Norma. After Harry had made his appearance Willis had left town. Harry had suspected that Miss Arbuckle resented his having supplanted Willis, and that had been the cause of her hostility.

Harry became conscious, with amazement and distress, that he was wishing Willis had stayed. He found himself questioning his fitness to marry Norma. Would their natures blend any more than light and darkness? He knew his weakness, his constant searching for that ideal whom Norma did not represent and never could represent.

Then the bronze hair and glorious eyes of Miriam blotted out poor Norma's picture from his mind.

He stayed three days at the hotel instead of a week, and Miriam occupied all his thoughts. They walked together, danced and drove together. Yet, with a mighty effort of will Harry, conscious as he was of Miriam's power over him, refrained from any love-making. Only, at the moment of parting, he asked permission to call on her in the city. And he saw an answering light leap into Miriam's eyes as she gave him her address.

"Good-by, Mr. MacIntyre."

That was all, but there was a world of meaning in the flutter of the little hand in his.

No, that was not quite all, for, at the very end, as he leaned from the buggy:

"Au revoir, Mr. MacIntyre."

Then Harry was gone to spend three miserable days at another hotel, a little place miles distant, where his days and nights were haunted by visions of Miriam.

And at the end he came to the conclusion that he must offer Norma her freedom.

And yet the thought of her grief maddened him with remorse. He did not know what to do.

In this undecided frame of mind he approached the house where she lived. He had gone there in the evening; it was dark except for a single light that shone in the parlor. As he approached the door he was arrested by hearing the sound of voices. Norma and May Arbuckle were talking.

"You say you never loved Willis and yet you think of him," said May. "Norma, dear, consider your heart's promptings before it is too late."

"I have considered them, May," answered Norma, "and they tell me that I have not erred in my choice."

"But at least Willis was more of your ideal than Harry," suggested May.

"In a way—yes, May. Willis was my oldest friend, you see. We shared all our tastes in common. And Harry is comparatively a stranger. We do not know each other yet."

"Norma, dear," said May Arbuckle, "do you know the fate of a woman who marries a man like that? At best, even if their marriage is to be a happy one she must be the slave of his moods."

"I have thought of that," said Norma miserably.

Harry started. Had Norma thought of that? Why, that had been in his own mind from the beginning, but he had never credited Norma with having the ability to analyze these obscure fashionings of psychic thought. He did not know Norma had seen what he had seen.

"You are running a grave danger, Norma," continued May Arbuckle,